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AUTHOR DeWine, Sue; And Others  
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## ABSTRACT

Three methods of data collection (nomination technique, survey instruments, and interviews) were used in a study that examined the way power was perceived by men and women in an organization and how women acquired and manifested power in a male-dominated organization. A total of 86 teachers and administrators were interviewed with the following breakdown: 10 male administrators, 2 female administrators, 25 male teachers, 46 female teachers, and 3 interviews where sex of subject was not recorded on the transcriptions. Respondents were asked to identify those who had power in their organization, the power strategies used, and how likely they would be to use certain types of statements with coworkers to influence their behavior. The evidence gathered suggested the following: (1) female teachers felt powerless but were unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to gain power by changing their position; (2) teachers and administrators agreed to a negative reaction to "power" and a positive reaction to "influence"; (3) the strategies described by females in power positions were more assertive than those described by female teachers; (4) female teachers were unwilling to adapt personal strategies to a "male" model; and (5) female teachers perceived less two-way communication in decision making in their buildings than did their male counterparts. (HOD)

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WOMEN AND POWER IN THE MALE-DOMINATED ORGANIZATION:  
AN INTERPRETIVE STUDY

Dr. Sue DeWine  
Sandra Alspach  
Ann Branch  
Abraham Labiano  
Sara Liston  
Nancy McDaniel

School of Interpersonal Communication  
Ohio University  
Athens, Ohio 45701

Presented to the Center for Continuing Studies  
Interdisciplinary Conference  
"Organizational Policy and Development"  
Louisville, Kentucky  
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## WOMEN AND POWER IN THE MALE-DOMINATED ORGANIZATION

Power has been characterized as "the fundamental concept in social science. . . in the same sense energy is the fundamental concept in physics" (Russell, 1938, p. 10). Yet research on power in the organization has been fragmented (Astley and Sachdeva, 1984). Cobb (1982) defines power as "the development of means to achieve intended effects" (p. 295). The way in which individuals communicate these means to others, particularly women in male-dominated cultures, is the focus of the research project described here.

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Power

Power has been operationally defined from any of several positions along a continuum from an "ability to employ force or realization of one's own will in social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (Wrong, 1980, p. 4), to the "capacity to modify the conduct of other employees in a desired manner, together with the capacity to avoid having one's own behavior modified in undesired ways by other employees" (McMurray, 1973, p. 140). Whether power involves forceful action or the ability to influence, in its most generic form, it is "the potential effect of one person on another, in which the effect is some form of change of behaviors, cognitions, attitudes, or emotions" (Farace, Monge, and Russell, 1977, p. 162). Kanter

(1983) has also suggested that power and change or innovation are linked: "Innovation...requires that the innovators get enough power to mobilize people and resources to get something nonroutine done" (p. 213) and "Power...is intimately connected with the ability to produce; it is the capacity to mobilize people and resources and to get things done" (p. 213).

French and Raven (1960) identified five bases of social power: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power, and expert power. These bases could be generally grouped into three categories: control of limited resources (reward and coercive power), control of information (expert power), and perception of power by an "other" (legitimate and referent power). Cobb (1980) found that informal influence in the formal organization is significantly and positively correlated with each of French and Raven's bases of social power in both lateral (between work unit peers) and horizontal (along the chain of command) relationships. This correlation suggests that the terms "power" and "influence" could be used interchangeably, in a general sense, when considering the decision-making and change process in an organization. Indeed, Hall and Hawker (1981) asserted, "Power--the exertion of influence--is a fact of organizational life" (p. 1).

Clary and Lake (1975) posited three interactive strategies by which power can be developed that closely resemble the grouping of French and Raven's five bases of power suggested earlier: power created by competition

(reward and coercive power), power created by the catalytic action of coordinating activities and resources between parties (expert power), and power developed by a sharing or collaborative strategy between members of a "collective" (legitimate and referent power).

McClelland and Burnham (1976), in studying the relationship between power and management success, discovered that a strong power motivation was more characteristic of successful managers than either a strong need for achievement or a strong need for affiliation (need to be liked by others). They identified three motivational profiles of managers vis a vis power: the affiliative manager who would rather be liked than wield power; the personal power manager who has a high need for achievement and personal accomplishment; and the institutional manager who also has a high need for power, directed more toward the common good than personal enhancement.

Emerson (1962) studied power as a function of social interaction rather than personal attribute. His discussion of power-dependence relationships as a balancing operation de-emphasized the first two groupings of French and Raven's power bases and directed greater attention to the third grouping, perception of power by "other," or the "negotiation" of power between participants.

Finally, Kanter (1983) viewed power as a function of the organizational environment, that is, the organization's structure and culture. Her study of "change masters" indicated that all the enterprise, initiative, and bright ideas

of a creative potential innovator may go nowhere if he or she cannot get power to turn ideas into action. Organizational power derives from supplies of three "basic commodities" that can be invested in action: information, resources, and support (p. 216). These three "commodities" echo our three suggested groupings of French and Raven's social bases of power.

All of these assessments of power focus attention on the individual who "has" it or "uses" it to promote change.

#### Gender Differences

Interest in identifying differences between men and women in the acquisition and use of power has grown as a result of the dramatic change in the gender composition of the workforce in the last 100 years, as revealed in statistical comparisons made by S.I. Diamond (1984).

One explanation for the scarcity of women in powerful positions has focused on significant differences in attitudes and practices between female and male workers. For example, the idea that women work for "pin money" and not to "put food on the table" persists. Men are more likely to be viewed as long-term assets in the organization and are given more opportunity for growth and development than are women. Women are viewed as short-term assets and expected to put family first in a time of crisis (Rosen & Jerdee, 1974 A & 1974 B).

Another explanation for the general lack of upward mobility of women in the organization, and the commensurate inequalities that exist between male and female salaries

(Heilman and Saurwatori, 1979; Rosen and Mericle, 1979) may be a discrepancy in the ability of female managers to negotiate power effectively. Wiley and Eckelson (1982) found that adoption of similar power strategies by men and women did not assure equivalent evaluation of their performances as managers.

Differences between men and women in socialization has also been viewed as an explanation for discrepancies in the ability to negotiate power suggested by the greater number of men in recognized power positions. In early research, Becker (1963) forwarded the notion that a middle class male's training is career directed while his socialization is directed towards seeking out a marriageable female for emotional support. McGregor (1967) saw the managerial role model as sex specific:

The model of the successful manager in our culture is a masculine one. The good manager is aggressive, competitive, firm and just. He is not feminine, he is not soft, yielding or dependent. The very expression of emotion is widely viewed as a feminine weakness that would interfere with the effective business process (p. 23).

Broverman, et al. (1972) saw early socialization of males as highly consistent with the demands of top positions in organizations. They suggested that boys have been brought up to be tough, highly competitive, and ambitious.

Prather (1971) contrasted traditional female socialization patterns with male patterns. He noted that female training emphasizes nurturance and support of marriage and family. Henning and Jardin (1977) concluded that sex specific socialization has resulted in a role conflict

between domestic and professional issues resulting in women being more "job" focused in the workplace and men being more "career" focused. They claimed that this "job" focus has affected the way women respond to risk-taking in the workplace.

Men seek risk as loss or gain, winning or losing, danger or opportunity. Women see risk in negative ways--loss, danger, injury, ruin. They see it as something to avoid if possible. Men see risk as affecting the future; you take your gamble now in order to achieve some later career advancement. Women, on the other hand, see risk only in current terms--the threat of losing what they have achieved so far (1977b, p. 78).

While Henning and Jardin (1977a) admitted to exceptions to their theory, they suggested that successful female executives tend to be different from other women in upbringing, behavior, and personality.

Studies in socialization patterns for women suggest that while women are socialized to make commitments that involve sacrifice for home and family, they are discouraged from making the same sacrifices for job or career (Kanter, 1968 and 1972).

Kanter (1977) has suggested that the numerical imbalance between males and females calls attention to the uniqueness of women in the organization and creates "token" dynamics. Specifically, a skewed ratio of majority to minority members increases the visibility of "tokens" so that they experience greater performance pressure. At the same time, deviation from the majority confers a lower status on "tokens." Because status is usually correlated with power (Secord and Blackman, 1974), "tokens" would accordingly have less power.

However, Fairhurst and Snively (1983) have challenged this assessment and reported research suggesting that the numerical imbalance is not the cause of unequal distribution of power, but rather an artifact of the social hierarchy, so that, even when males are in "token" positions, they still retain a stronger power base.

Power is generally associated with individuals, yet gender research suggests that significant differences exist in perceptions of "powerful" men and women, and in their behaviors, as well.

#### Research Question

The apparent disagreement between attributional and social structural, or "cultural," explanations for differences in power acquisition and utilization between men and women led us to ask: How is power perceived by men and women in an organization; and, how do women acquire and manifest power in a male-dominated organization?

#### CHOICE OF A CULTURAL APPROACH AND INTERPRETIVE METHODOLOGY

Interest in viewing organizations from a cultural perspective has grown explosively during the last ten years (see, for example, Peters and Waterman, 1982; Deal and Kennedy, 1982; the Spring, 1982 issue of *The Western Journal of Speech Communication*; the December, 1983 issue of *Administrative Science Quarterly*, and Putnam and Pacanowsky, 1983). Deetz (1982) summarized the most prevalent definition

of organizational culture: "An organization's culture consists of whatever a member must know or believe in order to operate in a manner understandable and acceptable to other members and the means by which this knowledge is produced and transmitted" (p. 133). Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) offered three basic tenets of a cultural approach to understanding organizations, based on Geertz (1973):

1. Cultures are "webs of significance" spun out of "jokes, stories, songs, myths, polite exchanges and so forth... (which give) substance and meaning to what would otherwise be insensate behavior."
2. Cultures are "constructed and displayed by those whose existence is embedded in a particular set of webs."
3. Cultures are "contexts...amenable not to causal analysis but to interpretation... 'thick description'--that reveals the nuances of sense-making displayed... (by) cultural members." (p. 123)

Deetz and Kersten (1983) posited that most organizational cultures exist simultaneously on two levels: the surface structure and the deep structure. The surface structure, the apparent behaviors of organizational members based on dictate and habit, frequently hides or disguises intentions that generate actions; but the deep structure of implicit rules, meaning systems, and relationships in an organizational culture provides individuals with a more stable and enduring set of explanations for their actions. This double leveling of organizational structures accounts for apparent paradoxes which frequently surface in cultural research, for example, the apparent paradox between person and position in determining the source of organizational power. "Power resides in certain individuals who can

exercise influence but power also resides in implicit rules and structural arrangements" (Deetz and Kersten, 1983, after Clegg, 1979). Cultural study places a high premium on discovering both the surface and deep structures that "contain" an organizational process so that its members can construct meanings, that is, "make sense of" their situation (Conrad, 1983). Because of inconsistencies in results from previous research designs, the cultural approach seems justified as another way to discover power and gender relationships in an organization.

Interpretive researchers have claimed that traditional quantitative methods alone fail to uncover ways in which organizational members construct meaning (Albrecht and Ropp, 1982; Deetz, 1982; Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982; Putnam, 1983). Faules (1982) summarized the argument:

The Functionalist (traditional) view looks upon the organization as a concrete entity with "real world" existence...The Interpretive view suggests that the social world does not have an objective, independent existence which imposes itself upon human beings. The social world is made up of symbolic behavior sustained through human interaction. (p. 152)

An interpretive approach assumes that "what constitutes the legitimate realm of inquiry is everything that constitutes organizational life" (Pacanowsky, 1982). This broad perspective encourages the use of multiple methods of inquiry and discovery. The "triangulation" of quantitative and qualitative data offers opportunity for researchers to come from different viewpoints toward the same phenomenon, yielding "convergent validity" (Albrecht and Ropp, 1982; Bouchard, 1976; Faules, 1982; Jick, 1979).

In order to move beyond description to a better interpretation of the ways in which organizational members understand power and gender relationships, this study included three methods of accumulating data: nomination technique (Kanter, 1983), interviews, and survey instruments.

## METHOD

### Subjects

The superintendents of seven school districts in a county-wide cooperative network were contacted to acquire permission to conduct the research project in schools in that county. The educational organization was chosen as the target for this study for two reasons. First, the educational organization was selected to test Weick's (1976) theory that educational organizations could be described as "loosely coupled systems" in that "rational" connections between members of the system do not always describe the way in which the system actually works. Weick suggested that "loose coupling" should result in a large amount of time by members spent in face and linguistic work rather than in more traditional kinds of influencing strategies (p. 12). Gilchrist and Browning (1984) continued analysis of the "loose coupling" model, arguing that traditional standards of rationality are rarely met in a "loosely coupled system," as exemplified by the impact of "entrepreneurs" on organizational change (after Peters and Waterman, 1982; and Kanter, 1983). If the description of "loose coupling" is appropriately applied to educational organizations, we should expect to see

power strategies other than rational models being used to effect change. A second reason for choosing an educational organization for study was that the educational organization appeared to reflect the imbalance of males and females in "power positions" indicated in our second research question. The assumption of male-dominance of "power positions" in the educational organization was confirmed by our observation that our research population contained fewer than 5% female administrators while there were fewer than 15% male teachers. Thus, the conditions in an educational organization appeared to be appropriate for a study of gender differences in the acquisition and use of power strategies in a male-dominated culture.

Eventually, teachers and administrators in five school buildings from three different school systems and members of the central administrative staffs of two school districts served as the population from which subjects were selected. A total of 86 staff members were interviewed with the following breakdown: 10 male administrators, 2 female administrators, 25 male teachers and 46 female teachers and 3 interviews where sex of subject was not recorded on the transcriptions.

#### Procedures

First, researchers attended faculty meetings at each school involved in the project to explain the objectives of the research and to ask teachers and staff to define the terms "influence" and "power." Next, staff members were

asked to identify individuals in that school building who had formal influence ("position power") and/or informal influence ("getting others to do what they want"). In addition, staff members were asked to identify individuals in the school system who were perceived to have formal and/or informal influence. Subjects could identify as many individuals as they wanted. Once the listing was completed, subjects were asked to check their list of names and to add names of the opposite sex if any of their lists contained examples of only one sex.

The second stage of the research project was to select nominated and non-nominated individuals to interview about their own and others' influence strategies. These interviews lasted an average of 20 minutes and followed the same semi-scheduled interview guide. The semi-scheduled interview approach was selected for its flexibility in allowing for subjects to introduce topics of which the interviewer may not have been aware prior to the interview (Richardson, Dohrenwend, and Klein, 1965). Researchers were also encouraged to observe nonverbal responses from subjects during the interview process to aid in appraising the validity or accuracy of the respondent's verbal response, as suggested by Warner and Lunt (1941).

The following questions were asked:

1. How are decisions made by the staff in this building? in this school system?

2. Have you ever felt that you could change another decision-maker's mind? How did you try to influence him/her? Was this attempt successful? What would you do differently if the situation were to arise again? What would you do differently to influence this individual in a new situation?
3. How much power do you see yourself having in making changes here in this building? in the system? What do you think you would have to do to gain power? Do you think a person in your position can exercise power...in the building? in the system?
4. What are some other ways in which you are able to influence others in this building? in the system?
5. Describe some of the ways in which you go about enhancing your own position. Have you ever considered a move into an administrative position?
6. Can you describe other people with influence in this school building? in the system? What makes them influential; what techniques do they use?
7. Can you recall a specific incident in which one or more of these people mentioned above exhibited power or influence? What were your reactions to this incident? Did the incident change any structure or way of doing things in the building?
8. Generally, how would you contrast the way in which males versus females establish influence and power in this building? in this system?

Respondents were also asked to complete one of two influence instruments (Kearny, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey, 1985; or Kipnis and Schmidt, 1982). In each case, subjects were asked to identify how likely they would be to use certain types of statements with co-workers to influence their behavior. Teachers were specifically asked not to think of the influence patterns exhibited in their classrooms with students, but instead to think of the influence patterns they used with other staff members.

The final stage of data collection was confirmation interviews with nominated women in "power" positions; that is, building administrators.

### Instruments

The Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs) and Behavior Alteration Messages (BAMs) (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey, 1985) are instruments used to look into the power strategies in organizations, specifically that of supervisors' and subordinates' communication techniques and messages. The form of the BAMs instrument used in this study included 22 sample messages, each using a different technique of influence. Subjects indicated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 "never" to 5 "very often" the frequency with which they used each technique of influence. Although no validity information was available for the instrument, an analysis of reliability, treating each statement as a separate variable, rated the BAMs form used in the study at .95.

Kipnis and Schmidt's (1982) Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies (POIS) utilizes three forms. Form C relating to influencing co-workers was selected for this study. POIS(C) consists of 27 items which subjects rank on a five-point Likert scale in terms of frequency of use from 1 "never" to 5 "almost always." In addition, the instrument asks subjects to respond to each statement twice: the first time, in terms of initial influence attempts; the second time, in terms of influence strategies employed after resistance is encountered. Statistical analysis of the pilot instrument yielded six final dimensions of influence strategies which are identified by POIS(C): Reason, Friendliness, Bargaining, Assertiveness, Coalition, and

Appeal to Higher Authority. Based on a series of research studies (Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson, 1980), Kipnis and Schmidt report reliabilities for each dimension on POIS(C) as follows: Reason, .77; Friendliness, .73; Coalition, .64; Bargaining, .74; Assertiveness, .65; and Higher Authority, .68.

#### QUANTITATIVE MEASURES: Data Analysis and Interpretation

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were run on both survey instruments to determine if significant differences existed between individual school staffs. Only one item out of 22 on the Kearney et al. instrument showed a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between schools, which was interpreted as no significant difference overall. The statistical procedure resulted in no significant differences between schools on any of the six principal dimensions (Friend, Bargaining, Reason, Assertiveness, Authority, Coalition) measured by the Kipnis-Schmidt instrument. Our decision to collapse all five schools into a single population for further analysis was supported by statistical comparison.

T-tests compared males and females on all 22 items of the Kearney et al. instrument. Significant differences were found on only three items of the 22 total items in the instrument. We determined that this result indicated no significant differences between males and females overall as measured by this instrument.

T-tests were run comparing males and females on the six principle factors resulting from the Kipnis-Schmidt

instrument. Three factors showed significant differences: Bargaining ( $t = 2.61$ ,  $df = 26$ ,  $p < .05$ ); Reason ( $t = 2.24$ ,  $df = 27$ ,  $p < .05$ ); Authority ( $t = 2.35$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In all three cases, means for females were higher than males. Kipnis and Schmidt (1982) describe these three dimensions in this way:

*Bargaining* involves influencing others through negotiation and the exchange of benefits or favors. The tactics used are based on the social norms of obligation and reciprocity...Bargaining is common, but is used less with supervisors than with co-workers or subordinates.

*Reason* describes the strategy of influencing people by relying on data and information to support one's requests. It involves planning, preparation, and expertise on the part of the influencer... Facts and logical arguments are used to convince the "target" person. Reason is the most popular strategy used in organizations.

*Appeal to higher authority* is a strategy of influence that relies on the chain of command. The influencer uses people higher up in the organization who have power over the target person. This is an indirect means of influence...This strategy is *not* widely used and is used less with supervisors than with co-workers or subordinates. Perhaps the risk of "going over the boss's head" causes people to avoid using this strategy with their manager.

(pp.1-2)

Achieving significant differences in three different influence strategies between males and females suggested an initial confirmation that these educational organizations meet Browning's (1978) criteria that members of loosely coupled organizations view reason as only one means of influencing change. We turned to data gathered from the interviews to assist in explaining why females would respond more strongly to these influencing strategies than males.

## QUALITATIVE MEASURES

First, all interviews were transcribed and a grounded theory approach was used to analyze the data collected. Glaser and Strauss (1967) define grounded theory as "the discovery of theory from data--systematically obtained and analyzed in social research" (p. 1). The elements of the theory generated by comparative analysis are: conceptual categories; their conceptual properties; and hypotheses or generalized relations among the categories and their properties (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Support for a grounded theory approach to social research as a methodological foundation for the building of organizational communication theory is given by Weick (1969), Hawes and Fisher (1971), Browning (1978), and Cusella (1984).

A number of categories were examined in a grounded theory analysis of the interview transcriptions: a frequency count of types of decision-making techniques used in the school, references to teachers' sense of their own power as well as the influence of the administrators on the cultural environment of the school, identification of adjectives to describe power and influence, responses to differences between males and females and their use of power techniques, and anecdotal references to power/influence situations.

These categories collapsed into three thematic focus areas, suggested by the three stages of the "power episode" in Cobb's Episodic Model of Power (1984). The first thematic focus area concerned descriptions of the decision-making

process by the members of the organization, and their perceptions of their personal impact on decision making. The second thematic focus area concerned descriptions of behaviors associated with power, identifying differences between men and women. The third thematic focus area concerned descriptions of situations in which power or influence had affected relations between individuals in the organization.

#### Decision making as a Manifestation of Power in a Culture

Interviews were initiated by asking the subjects to describe how decisions are made both at the building level and at the system level. Decision making as an entry point for organizational interpretation is justified by Tompkins and Cheney (1983) who argued that decision making is essential to organizational functioning, communication and decision making are inseparable, the examination of the decision-making process provides a means of tapping the mutual influences of people and organizations, and the decision provides a finite unit for analysis. In confirmation of Tompkins and Cheney's fourth assertion, we found that results of the decision-making question could be explained more precisely than results of more open-ended questions concerning influence strategies and gender differences.

All responses to the decision-making question were listed, noting clusterings around identical words and phrases. Two general categories of comparisons emerged

when similar responses were collapsed together: one-way communication versus two-way communication, and formal (structural) versus informal patterns. One-way communication patterns in an educational organization, according to Sieber (1975), are frequently found where a "rational man" strategy of influencing change is predominant. In this construct, the major need of the practitioner is information. Two-way communication patterns are common in organizations emphasizing the "cooperator" strategy, where the assumption is made that practitioners are willing and able to cooperate in new ventures. Formal and informal patterns of communication might be thought to parallel norms implied by the structure of an organization and norms implied by the social relationships within the organization. Responses to the decision-making question comparing administrators with teachers and men with women on both the one-way/two-way and formal/informal dimensions are summarized in Table A.

#### Decision-making Patterns

|          | Number of Responses Given By: |          |       |         |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------|-------|---------|
|          | Administrators                | Teachers | Males | Females |
| One-way  | 4*                            | 44       | 22    | 26      |
| Two-way  | 16                            | 80       | 53    | 41      |
| Formal   | 7                             | 61       | 32    | 37      |
| Informal | 11                            | 63       | 39    | 31      |

Table A

\* subjects may have given more than one response to the question: How are decisions made in this building? system?

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Examples of statements which contributed to the collapsing of responses into categories include the following:

one-way:

"the top," "mandatory guidelines," "directives"

two-way:

"discussion," "in a participatory way," "sharing ideas," "involving a number of people"

formal/structural:

"the Central Office," "the Superintendent"

"the Administration," "memos," "committees"

informal:

"open to staff suggestions," "the principal asks for feedback," "the principal sets the tone,"

"sharing ideas," "staff makes feelings known"

Administrators and teachers reported twice as many two-way decisions as one-way. Men reported 13% more two-way decisions than women. All other differences are considered insignificant.

Significant clusters of identical responses from five or more of the subjects interviewed occurred around each of the following descriptive phrases:

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| "discussion"                      | M = 9, F = 5  |
| "principal with input from staff" | M = 6, F = 3  |
| "advisory board"                  | M = 2, F = 10 |
| "principal"                       | M = 5, F = 3  |

It is interesting to note that the predominant responses suggest that men, more often than women, report decision-making strategies that are one-on-one (discussion, principal, and principal with input), while women perceive decision-making more often as a group activity (advisory board). This observation did not hold true for one school sampled, where group participation was believed to occur as often as one-on-one influence attempts by both men and women. An interpretation of this difference is made in the next section.

## Decision making and the Cultural Environment

### Powerlessness

Of the 86 subjects interviewed, 41 made statements referring to their sense of helplessness and lack of power not only in the system as a whole (which almost every subject alluded to), but within their own school building. This represents approximately 47% of the subjects who indicated a lack of any influence or power over their colleagues or administrators. Comments like the following were frequently made:

"If the administration doesn't want our choice answer, you know, they just tell us the way it's going to be."

"We listen to him (principal) and we do what he says."

"Administrators are pretty set in what they want to do--not a whole lot I could do."

"We (the teachers) have very little input into the decision-making process."

"I have no influence in the system whatsoever."

"I don't see myself as very influential. We're isolated down here in the gym and we do pretty much as we want."

"I do not feel that what I have to say will be given the time of day...I have tried but given the same situation again, I would not try again--I would take the apathetic approach--I will not do anything. I will mind my own business."

"No, I don't feel I can change the mind of a decision-maker. To change someone's mind you must have influence. As far as I am concerned, I would not try. I did in the past..."

"I don't think I have any influence. I think I'm more of a listener and a supporter... A lot of times I withhold any comment about how I feel about particular issues."

"I'm so used to having people say this is what you do and I do it. Central office makes the decisions and what they say goes."

"Teachers are low on the totem pole."

Not only do teachers perceive themselves as having little influence over administration or their own colleagues, they see individuals who are not teachers having greater power than they do, like the school secretary:

"...the secretary is influential. If we don't do what she wants she would kill us. Her personality is that if you don't have them (required forms) in, she will come and get you."

"If you need something you go to (the secretary)... she can tell you how to do anything in this building. When she takes her vacation at Christmas, it's a mess."

Or the football coach:

"The football coach has influence--he comes to town and decides he's not playing in purple and gold uniforms, and they immediately change the school colors that have been the school colors forever to blue and gold. He wants a weight conditioning center and they build him one...he wants this and that and they always seem to find what he wants. He brings in an assistant who immediately gets tenure and the year before they cut 62 teachers from the system--so I don't understand the power base."

Or the superintendent:

"The superintendent and his assistants make decisions--they are deciding what they want to do--no input from us is my feeling."

Of the 42 subjects who indicated a sense of helplessness, 59% were women (24 out of the 41 female subjects). One explanation for the difference in responses noted in the clustering analysis might be that women reduce this feeling of powerlessness by working together with others on advisory boards, committees, or in departments, more frequently than

men. Males saw their lack of influence at the system level, while females perceived a lack of influence at the system as well as at the school level.

The notion of the powerlessness prevalent in the interview responses corresponds to Sieber's (1975) third strategy, "powerless participant," used by teachers to deal with the "structural looseness" (Bidwell, 1965) or "loose coupling" (Weick, 1976) which characterizes the educational organization.

#### Complacency

This lack of power seems to lead to an attitude of complacency. Examples of this attitude are reflected in such comments as:

"I wouldn't consider going over someone's head--I don't make waves."

One administrator said, "When you make decisions on a systemwide level, sometimes individuals get lost in the shuffle."

"I am not involved in most of the things that happen here. I work for the principal and I do the things that he expects me to do and accomplish. It is my job to obey directions from my boss."

"I've basically adopted the principle--find yourself a rock, dig a hole underneath it, and do your job. You do what is asked of you when you are asked."

"I try not to be real visible. Around here sometimes if you're heard too much you're turned off."

Powerlessness and the complacency that results, especially reported by women in the interviews, confirms and helps to explain the significant difference reported on the Kipnis-Schmidt instrument between men and women on the dimension of "Appeal to Higher Authority."

### Situations as Explanation

One striking observation in the data relates to the degree to which the principal influences the overall culture of the school system. Across all the school personnel interviewed, the teachers' comments were consistent, with the exception of one school. Most teachers said the principal makes the decisions and teachers implement them. "Either the decision is made by the principal or his assistants and handed down to us" and "The principal is the most influential because he has the title and the position" and similar comments indicate the degree to which teachers see the power of the principal. One administrator, when asked about the amount of power he had in decision making, said: "More than I wanted, more than I need, more than I should have."

The one school which was an exception to this general perception clearly demonstrates the ability of the school principal to influence the entire cultural environment of a school. One teacher reported that this principal was "open to new ideas"; and a large majority of the teachers in the building felt they could influence others as well as the principal. Statements reflecting this perception follow:

"I think the reason that it's a (positive environment here) is because the principal is very self-assured. He's been successful in his career, and he essentially doesn't worry about the future of his job."

"The principal is very influential in the sense that he is very 'up-front.' He explains why--doesn't just use position power--allows for input from individuals and groups"

"His philosophy is to discuss and act on consensus."

That same principal describes the communication process in his building this way:

"I think it is very important that my staff have the opportunity to get mad at me--I don't always expect them to agree with me--I do expect them to always be courteous. In the heat of a conflict, I feel that out of that come some of the nicest relationships that can ever be developed."

Clearly, in this environment, conflict is perceived as a positive force. This culture reflects more of Sieber's (1975) "cooperator" strategy than any of the other building staffs surveyed, yet this difference did not appear in the quantitative data.

The extreme nature of the these teachers' sense of powerlessness was surprising. While the educational system fosters autonomy, the degree to which teachers close themselves off from decision-making functions was not expected. The anger and submerged frustration seemed quite obvious during many interviews in one building. The research team discovered, during the interviews, that the principal had assigned times for all teachers to be interviewed without asking if they were willing to participate in the study. In another building, teachers expressed the thought that the principal was trying to "check up on them" and were quite angry at the way the study had been presented to them.

But, at the school with the positive image about their culture, the teachers were anxious to talk to the research team and all teachers participated on a voluntary basis. The principal who was the most concerned that responses remain absolutely anonymous had the least reason for concern.

Another observation made by members of the research team as they collected data illustrates the contrast in cultural environments between the school in which staff reported a positive image and a school in which staff reported a more negative self-image. The principal in the "positive self-image" school kept a "lending library" of books dealing with social interaction and communication. During his interview, he selected several volumes for the interviewer to review. This open exchange of new ideas, represented by the sharing of books, was reported frequently by his staff members during their interviews and in informal conversation with the research team during the data collection period.

This administrator was also described as "secure in his position"; the general perception of his staff was that he could accept ideas from them because he did not feel threatened by them. Generally, they reported that he takes time to give positive feedback and attention to everyone, not only those who demand it. In his interview, he confirmed that he gives careful thought to how he communicates with others in the organization. The administrator and the staff enjoy a relationship of mutual respect and openness.

In contrast, members of the research team who collected data in a school from another school district participating in the study noted a cartoon which depended on its humor from the interplay of sexual stereotypes, particularly the subservience of women to men in an office setting, pinned to the staff bulletin board in the lounge. This display seemed to exemplify to the researchers the general lack of mutual

respect not only between men and women, but also between teachers and administrators in this school as suggested in their interviews and informal conversation during the data collection period.

We observed a definite contrast between the perception the principal in this building has of his relationship with his staff and their perceptions of that relationship. He claimed to be open and honest, but no one in his organization credited him with those attributes. He claimed to be open to suggestions for change, but his staff reported the perception that he feared their suggestions as a threat to his position of power. Generally, descriptions of his leadership style by his staff reflected insecurity and a reliance on his position to control decision making in his building.

These situational observations suggest that the administrative leader in an educational organization has the potential to encourage a positive cultural environment by virtue of his personality and sensitivity to communication skills. The traditional "chain-of-command" structure found in similar educational organizations could be obviated by a conscious attempt to foster mutual respect and open communication.

## INFLUENCE AND POWER

### Definition of Terms: Observations and Interpretation

Contrary to expectations derived from a review of the literature, the research team observed that the terms "influence" and "power" elicited different, and frequently, opposite emotional responses from the interview subjects: "influence" was considered a positive co-relationship between people, but "power" was considered a negative superior-subordinate type of relationship.

"Power" seemed to imply that decisions which affect others are made by the person who holds a position granting him/her the decision-making authority. Power, as one administrator said, is "...like a big hammer...(it) comes down on somebody and says, 'you will do this'." An example typical of the negative connotation associated with the term "power" is: "Influence is okay, but power may not be" (male subject). Interviewers noted that when male administrators were asked to describe how much power they perceived themselves to have, nine of the ten responded using the term "influence" rather than "power."

Even when positive or negative connotations were not attached to the definitions of the target words "power" and "influence," respondents frequently distinguished between the two. For example, one female said, "I have no power, but I have influence." Another example is the view that the school secretary is considered to have power, but not necessarily influence. Because of her position in the organizational

structure in controlling resources, information, and access to the principal, she could either make things easy or rough for the teachers in the school building. Many teachers who reported perceiving this power also reported that they consciously tried to cultivate a harmonious relationship with the secretary to influence her to use her power in their favor.

Observing the conscious separation most respondents made between "power" and "influence," we were led to conclude that, in an educational organization, members perceive fine distinctions between power resulting from control of information and resources and power resulting from support of the social relationship. French and Raven's (1959) reward, coercive, and expert power bases appear to be associated in the minds of the respondents with negative affect responses, while power from legitimate or referent power bases appears to be associated with positive affect responses.

However, the most common response from women to the interview question concerning perceptions of personal power was, "I do not feel I have influence." When women were asked if they would like to move into a position with greater power, like a principalship, many said "no." Several explanations were given. Frequently, female teachers rejected the possibility of becoming an administrator because they preferred to remain in the classroom to maintain a closer contact with the children. Another common response came from an observation that administrators put in more time, and the female teachers chose to devote that extra time

to family, rather than professional career. Some rejected the notion because they associated administrative behavior with male "game-playing" and claimed they were not willing to "play the game."

### Personal Perceptions

Responses to questions concerning definitions of "power" and "influence," personal perceptions of "power" or "influence," and descriptions of behaviors associated with the "powerful" or "influential" appeared to cluster into two categories: "positive" perceptions and "negative" perceptions. Sixty-six responses were identified as "positive," while twenty responses were identified as "negative."

Ten respondents agreed that a powerful person is one who is involved in activities with students outside of the classroom. This description was considered "positive." Other responses given more than once and identified as "positive" included:

- "personable behavior--personal power"
- "knowing what's going on"
- "be logical, rational, professional"
- "use a direct approach"
- "be receptive to ideas, willing to change attitudes"

Examples of "negative" responses given more than once by respondents included:

- "yelling and screaming--ranting and raving"
- "be demanding--male oriented" (said about powerful women)

Generally, both men and women described powerful male behavior differently from powerful female behavior. Men saw

powerful males as outgoing and straightforward, louder, more confident. For example, one male subject said, "Men are more objective, women take their feelings like a religious cause and defend it." But powerful females were perceived by men to be more vocal and pushy: for example, male respondents said, "Women are less direct and less blunt. They seem to be less tactful." or "Most of the female administrators are very wishy-washy."

Women described powerful males as more demanding, powerful females as emotional, more concerned with feelings. Examples of differences perceived by female subjects include "women are more verbal than men"; "women have to be more vocal, men don't have to be"; "Men are more task oriented, women influence more based on personal relationships"; "Men are more forceful...they are more inclined to say it is this way. If a woman is demanding, she still doesn't have as much influence as a man."

While many respondents considered power to be associated with position or the ability to make decisions that affect other people, they did not discount their own potential to influence the decision makers. Influence was described as deriving from experience, seniority, community involvement, close associations with decision makers, a "good track record," accessibility for discussion of issues, and dedication to the job as reflected in time spent outside of normal classroom contact time.

A few female respondents associated influence with negative behaviors, for example, the young female teacher who

uses her charm to influence the principal, or the coach who uses his community popularity to get what he wants. Men, on the other hand, generally described influence in positive terms, associating it with skill in communication and an ability to analyze a situation in order to use the best methods to persuade decision makers. Men were not resentful of others who had influence and frequently commented that they observed the influential in order to learn from their example.

Although a comment like "I don't see any gender differences, just personality differences" was made in all three school systems, the research team noted that a significant number of subjects in one school (27 out of 32 interviewed) reported observing no differences between the behaviors of powerful men and powerful women in their system. One respondent commented, "Females that can use the best of masculine and feminine behaviors can be very influential." It is interesting to note that this school was the same one identified earlier as emphasizing cooperative strategies for decision making, and a "positive" culture, nurtured by the openness and communication skills of the chief administrator.

#### Influence Strategies

Both men and women interviewed placed a high value on rational influence strategies. Men suggested that, in order to gain power, a person should "give the facts, all aspects, present the benefits"; "logically present the facts, be rational"; "sit down and discuss the issue in a well thought

out way"; "back opinion with research or past experience."  
Women described influence strategies including "present the facts, use logic, present the pro's and con's"; "offer factual information and experience, examples"; "use a rational, logical approach."

Men generally preferred more active approaches to influencing others: "stick to your guns, be consistent"; "work harder at your position, be a good teacher"; "get involved with the community"; "be honest, up front, direct, have a dynamic personality." Women, on the other hand, described more passive strategies: "understand others' needs"; "be open and friendly"; "be low-key"; "be responsive to needs of parents and students"; "listen to others."

The apparent agreement between men and women that influence strategies based on reason are superior tends to contradict the finding of significant differences between men and women in this sample in their perceptions of the use of Reason on the Kipnis-Schmidt instrument. However, another interpretation of this phenomenon could be that women responded more strongly to "Reason" statements on the survey instrument than men in an effort to overcome the stereotype that assumes that women react from emotion rather than reason in making decisions. This interpretation assumes that women in the sample reasoned that a survey instrument designed by men would have inherent sexist bias, and purposefully exaggerated their responses to contradict a female stereotype.

On the other hand, the difference in descriptive terms for enhancing influence given by men as opposed to women in the sample tends to confirm the results of the Kipnis-Schmidt instrument on the Bargaining dimension. Women reported more descriptors that implied cooperation and negotiation, as their high mean on the Bargaining dimension predicted. Men reported more descriptors that implied competition, as their lower mean on the Bargaining dimension predicted.

It appeared that our interpretation of responses from interviews and the results from the survey instruments did not complement each other in all cases, especially in interpreting the responses to Reason as an influence strategy. However, advocates of multi-method research designs claim that contradictions between quantitative and qualitative data should not be construed as unresolvable anomalies, but rather as confirmation of the complexity of human interaction and, inferentially, of the value of an interpretive research design to provide explanations for the "deep structures" of human communication perceptions and behaviors in an organization (see Albrecht and Ropp, 1982; Faules, 1982; and Jick, 1979). As Browning (1978) suggests, researchers must be willing to think about organizations as "loosely coupled," not dysfunctional.

#### Situations as Explanation: Influence Strategies

Two male administrators, representing two different school systems, made similar observations about power and influence strategies which offer additional explanation for

the differences perceived by most respondents between the two terms.

"I've learned something else over the years, too, that the person in authority, he already has the cards, the cards are already stacked in his or her favor. And you don't need to really flaunt that, you don't need to remind people of your power position."

"...maybe ten years ago, maybe twelve years ago, I was the type of person that I wanted to carry a big hammer and I was really tough on people and I could really be an SOB. But once you 'mellow,' you know, just gaining expertise or whatever, I guess I'm not into that anymore. And I'd rather just be my own person."

Both men suggest that experience changes a person's perception of how to gain or use power. This observation corresponds with teachers' reports of experience as a factor in gaining influence.

Our data were insufficient to confirm the possible interpretation that those who reported the desirability of "power" strategies over "influence" strategies were among the younger teachers; however, the principals contrasted earlier in terms of the cultures projected by their staffs in interviews and our observations also contrast in experience and age. The principal encouraging the open "positive" culture has been an administrator for over ten years; the principal of the building staff reporting a more closed "negative" culture has been an administrator for fewer than five years; and the men are approximately twenty years apart in age.

## CONCLUSIONS AND CONFIRMATION

Based on the accumulation of evidence gathered from the educational organizations participating in this study, the following conclusions are suggested:

### How is power perceived by men and women in an organization?

1. Both men and women perceive "power" negatively and "influence" positively.
2. Women perceive fewer examples of two-way communication in decision making in their schools, than men do.
3. Women report feelings of powerlessness to make or influence decisions in their schools.
4. Women express unwillingness to gain power by assuming a more powerful position in the organization.

### How do women acquire and manifest power in a male-dominated organization?

1. Both men and women place a high value on reason to influence others; women report a stronger dependence on rational strategies than men do. But reason is not perceived to be the only strategy for influencing others (see Browning, 1978).
2. Women prefer more passive "bargaining" approaches to influencing others than men do.

### Confirmation

In order to test our conclusions, to verify that they represented an accurate accounting of educational organizations to members of those organizations, we interviewed two female principals who had been nominated as "influential" by both teachers and central office administrators, using the following semi-structured interview guide:

1. Outline your career path: how have you achieved the position you now hold? Was this position your original career goal: how have your career goals changed?

2. You have been identified as someone who is influential: how do you perceive yourself as an influencer? What strategies do you use to influence others? when they resist? Can you recall any incidents in which you felt successful in influencing another's decisions?
3. In what ways do you perceive yourself to have power in the building? in the system? Do you feel there is a difference between "power" and "influence"?
4. Do you sense any differences between the ways men view you as a "boss", and the ways women view you as a "boss"? Do men use different strategies to influence you than women?
5. What strategies do you perceive to be successful for women in the male-dominated administration of a public school system?

Significant similarities emerged from these interviews:

1. Both women reported strong influences in their childhood towards independence and initiative.

One principal said that she viewed herself as a "tomboy" as a child, "and always had a desire to get into a position where I could influence change." The other principal told how her strength as a woman had been formed in childhood: "...my mother had always worked... My father had died. So I was reared by a very strong woman."

2. Both women reported being approached by a male superior and encouraged into administration.

One principal had been encouraged by her principal when she was a teacher: "I talked to (the principal) at the time I was taking over the head of the English department about the possibility of getting into a principalship or possibly a supervisor capacity, (and) he encouraged me to go ahead and get the degree and the certification."

For the other principal, the encouragement had come in a more indirect way at an early age:

"My mother was a charge nurse...and when I was sixteen, I was working as a nurses' aide at the hospital. And the chief surgeon at the hospital whom everybody feared ...stopped me in the hall one day (and when Dr. S--- came by, you just saw those waters part)...and he grabbed me and he said, 'You're W---.'s daughter.' And I thought, 'Oh, my God...' and I said, 'Yes, sir, I am.' And I thought, oh, what have I done now; I'm trying so hard to do the best that I can. 'Girlie, your mother's the best damn nurse I've ever worked with. Hope you're as good someday.' Turned on his heel and left; and I (thought), 'Okay.'"

In another anecdote, she recounted how she had been encouraged to enter an administrative position:

"I was really 'elected'. When I went into the county office, the former elementary director of the county probably hand-picked me and said, 'I want you to be ready when I retire to take this position.'"

3. Both women reported entering administration as a result of frustration at a lower level (teaching or supervision). Both reported the need to have a greater influence in making changes.

One principal confided:

"It's just an internal drive that if I had to put a finger on why it's there I'm not sure why...but it's that desire for maybe power is the word, maybe some kind of influence is the word...I realize there's always ways that you can change and make (the classroom) challenging but I was losing motivation to do that."

The other principal reported that, while she was working as a county supervisor, she "really got disgruntled because you really didn't have the power to do anything. You ran around and pretended you were important; and as soon as you went away you knew they could do anything they wished."

4. Both women reported an initiation period during which they were "tested" by males to determine their management ability. Both reported more testing by parents of children in their buildings than teachers.

One principal recounted:

"Just a couple of weeks ago a phone call from a (male parent), about a detention...and he was going to play bully with me. And I couldn't get a word in edge-wise and I knew why. And I finally said, 'If you want to be quiet and listen to me long enough for me to explain what's going on, I'll be glad to. And if not, we might as well end this conversation because I'm not saying anything to you.' Well, then he shut up and listened."

The other principal replied that parents had tested her in her first principalship:

"Parents were not overly friendly. You were asked many questions that you though had..., the issue had been clarified. But they would keep coming in asking. Had they done that with the males that had been there before me, I had no way of knowing. I perceived that it had not happened (to the men)."

She also recalled the response of a male subordinate, a custodian, when he learned that he would be serving a female

"boss":

"The first week I came on duty, (the custodian) was gone. Which I thought nothing about--I just figured he had taken a week's vacation. Well, about October or November, he came to me one day...and said, 'You remember the first week you came, I wasn't here?... I took the week off and we tried to figure out at home if we could get by without my working, because I knew I couldn't work for a woman...And, you know what, it's going to be okay.' And he reached out and shook my hand."

5. Both women reported a difference between their perceptions of "power" and their perceptions of "influence." Both acknowledged that "power" gave them greater "influence" over their staffs, but they preferred to guide subordinates to agreement rather than coerce or threaten them.

One principal described the difference in much the same way that had been reported in the initial interviews:

"Power to me connotes 'power over people'; where I may get them to do what they don't want to do. Where influence is more of a cooperative, reciprocal kind of thing...If you say you have power over a person's life, you also accept the consequences for that. If you say you have influence, then it's a shared responsibility."

In describing her personal influence strategies, she said:

"I don't give orders. I'm not that kind of person. ...my belief is the whole system operates more productively if people believe in what they're doing."

She continued by describing an experience in which she had "talked to people individually and planted the seeds of thought" to influence their agreement.

The other principal agreed with the difference in theory, but not necessarily in actual practice:

"I would prefer influence. I perceive the meaning of the word power is 'I can make you do that whether it has validity or not.' Influence to me says 'The rational behind it is valid. I will explain that validity to you and therefore you will choose to agree with me.' Is that the way it always works? No, I don't think so....You do have to have (power), but I think you've got to have some expertise at influence to back it up. Because you can make people do things but you can't make them like it. And if you're going to keep something up, you've got to like it."

Both principals emphasized the importance of listening skills and a kind of communication reciprocity for those who want to have influence over others:

"I spend a lot of time during the day doing things I think a lot of people would see as wasted time. A lot of time listening to people. Teachers will pop in here any time, at the drop of a hat...When you have that relationship with people, then when you turn the tables and you do that to them, they listen to you."

"One of my personal goals this year has been to improve my listening skills. I realized that I was ramrodding some things, that maybe people were doing--this goes back to power--that they really did not understand why I thought that was important."

6. Both women reported the necessity for women to have competence in their areas before attempting to influence men.

One principal reported feeling that women needed to be more than "competent" to be accepted in power positions:

"...it's not enough to be good as a woman, I really believe that. A man can make mistakes and it blows over. If you (a woman) make a glaring mistake, it won't blow over."

She continued:

"...a man could say, 'I've got a lot of work to do at home, could you cover this activity for me?'...I felt I had to be everywhere all the time....that whole idea that you have to be 'super' really was true. I don't think I anticipated how true it was going to be."

This opinion was shared by the other principal we interviewed:

"If you're competent you'll be okay. You may have to work harder. But know your stuff."

"I think (the superintendent) has really tried to elevate women if he felt their competency was such that (they merited the promotion). He was looking for competency first, and if you don't have it, good-bye....the predominant number who have said good-bye have been males. Could it happen to a female? Yes. Will it happen because she's a female--no. It will happen because of the competency issue."

"So you really have to be secure unto yourself. You have to be competent. But, dear Lord, I hope a male has to have the same attributes!"

The notion that a woman has to be better than a man to succeed in a man's world is reaffirmed by Ayer (1984):

Demonstrated competencies and adequate performance are often not sufficient for advancement, particularly at the higher levels of administration. Women have to consciously learn the techniques of power and, in the position sense, how to manipulate a system in order to achieve positions of distinction. (p. 229)

7. Both women reported the necessity for women to be sensitive to the "system" of influence that exists among their male peers, and to adapt to it rather than attempting to impose their own styles of influence on others.

The sense that she had invaded "male territory" was more acute for the principal who was the only female among her administrative peers:

"When you'd get around the guys, there would be a lot of 'jock' talk going on. You'd feel excluded and it was intentional; you were excluded."

One particular male principal, a former coach, appeared to test this principal longer than the others, but she responded by taking time to prove her ability, listening to the "man talk" rather than avoiding it, and using her natural sense of humor to break down the barrier. Finally, she felt she had been accepted by this male principal when he gave her a non-verbal gesture (a "hit" on the arm) and told her she was different from the other women in administration. She concluded:

"...it's a good old boy fraternity, and it's pretty hard to get in... I'll tell you, with those guys, if you start playing this women's lib attitude, you're going to create yourself more grief than you ever thought about. Because they're just going to use you and dump on you, and they're not going to give you a chance to prove yourself....I'd rather bend over backwards to get along with them and be accepted for myself than make an issue over something petty...I do a lot of

bending over backwards with certain men I feel are sensitive to my being a woman. I do a lot of things to try to take away that sensitivity...I just do whatever feels right for me...If you're a woman who's hung up on the idea of being a woman, you'll never make it."

The adoption of "male" strategies for acceptance reported here squares with studies by Foster and Lolinko (1979) and Schein (1975) who noted that females in positions of leadership have characteristics similar to those of males in similar positions. Male and female supervisors in parallel positions were described by their immediate subordinates as exhibiting similar leader behavior patterns and were evaluated by those subordinates as equally effective (Day and Stogdill, 1972). Osborn and Vicars (1976) exploded the myth that only men are dominant, aggressive, and competitive enough to gain the necessary follower respect for effective supervision. These research findings also correspond to the reports from staff at the "positive image" school that there were no significant differences between influence strategies used by men and women in their building; influential women were verbal and assertive, characteristics associated with men more often than women. Ayer (1984) describes the recent acceptance of masculine behaviors by successful women leaders:

Women are often judged to be ill-prepared because of their behavior, and it is only in recent times that a woman who displays traditionally masculine behaviors is viewed as healthy. Even though she is now more likely to be viewed as healthy, many males will continue to accept her as a peer with countless 'yes-but (she is in some manner unusual)' reasons and rationalizations. (p. 233)

The use of the term "good old boys" by one female principal to describe the kind of relationship that exists among the men in administration echoes an observation by Ayer (1984):

The common term *old boys club* with its images of informal fraternization and comradery belies the devastating effects upon outsiders of not belonging to this tightly woven network. The exclusive structure of these culpable societies has been a critical source of frustration and agony to women and minorities... Immense sources of power are localized within the informal network, and it is only with the approval of these networks that token women begin to appear in upper-level positions. (p. 231)

8. Both women reported that accepting a power position required more sacrifice for a woman than a man, especially in terms of time spent away from the family; but both described their families as very supportive of their decision to go into administration.

Both women described their husbands as "special" because of the support they received in their professional career development. For one woman, the fact that her husband's mother had been a teacher explained his acceptance of the hours she put into her job. She laughingly claimed that what she and her husband needed was a wife! She had also received support from her mother in rearing her children. But, she said, "I look at it now, and I'm not sure how we did it."

For the other woman, time is the greatest sacrifice.

"I think you have to be willing to sacrifice family for job a lot of times...No matter who told me how many hours I would put into this building ahead of time I never would have believed (him/her)."

She described the difference between being a teacher and being an administrator for a woman:

"It's easier to have a family life as a teacher, because even though you may put in more than eight hours, you take the papers home to grade and you can do laundry at the same time or you can have the meal started at the same time. (As a principal), you have to attend basketball games, or a track meet, or a meeting, and you're here; you're just here."

She expressed concern about the impact of starting a family on her career; but, she depended on the support from her husband:

"I have a pretty special husband...and there's no doubt in my mind that he'd be a better mother than I would be, and I mean that honestly...He doesn't have this whatever this drive is, that keeps pushing. He's content with the eight hours a day job; doesn't bring it home with him, and he's happy."

Ayer (1984) generalized this sense of sacrifice:

Women who succeed are less similar to all other women than are men who succeed in comparison with other men. Women in nontraditional roles are likely to emphasize production or concrete accomplishments, have greater needs for achievement, and characterize themselves as more like managers (after Moore, 1977). A career-mindedness directs their activities and conveys an air of confidence and self-initiative. In addition to being less like other women, *by social definition* the successful executive woman will pursue selected goals at the expense of her family... (p. 236)

For both women, success in a male-dominated organization requires a strong sense of self-confidence, as a professional and as a woman, backed by competence in the field and support from home and family; and a commitment that accepts the personal sacrifice that achieving a power position entails. Pettigrew (1979, after Kanter, 1968 and 1972) describes commitment-building processes necessary to achieve leadership and power status in an organization:

Commitment-building processes involve persons detaching themselves from one set of options to go to another. They make sacrifices and investments... The investments can be...extraordinary amounts of time and energy...These processes involving sacrifice and investment may also necessitate relinquishing or at least partly withdrawing from other relationships and beliefs. (p. 578)

One of the principals described how she had had to sacrifice a social relationship with another administrator during her "initiation" period, to avoid being perceived as dependent on his power base for her own success.

#### DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

These definitions, descriptions, and situations, volunteered in interviews with two women nominated by their superiors, peers, and subordinates as "powerful," suggest some new insights about the conclusions offered from the initial research data.

In general, female teachers feel powerless but are unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to gain power by changing their position. The strong female principal is unusual in her acceptance of this sacrifice of time, family, and personal relationships in order to affect change in the organization and to satisfy her need for influence or power.

Teachers and administrators agree to a negative reaction to "power" and a positive reaction to "influence." The strategies described by females in power positions are more assertive than those described by female teachers. Female administrators acknowledge that situations may require them to adopt "male" strategies to gain access to male decision makers. Female teachers are unwilling to adapt personal

strategies to a "male" model. This conclusion matches Ayer's (1984) observation that "...through a process of acculturation, women become accommodative and passive, receiving ideas rather than initiating them. When they are expected to accomplish tasks requiring male-identified behaviors, such as administrative role behaviors, they are often penalized and isolated" (p. 234).

Female teachers perceive less two-way communication in decision making in their buildings than their male counterparts. Female administrators emphasize the importance to a successful organizational relationship of two-way communication, especially listening, on the part of the decision maker.

It is interesting to compare the female administrators interviewed during the confirmation phase of data collection with the male administrators described earlier as leaders of starkly contrasting cultural environments. One female principal has been in an administrative position less than five years, while the other has been a principal for more than ten years. They are approximately twenty years apart in age. The women responded in strikingly similar ways to the interview questions, as did the men. However, the observations of their superiors and subordinates confirmed that the women's perceptions of their ability to influence were accurate, whereas, one principal was shown to have a grave misconception of his personal power to influence his staff.

The data and interpretations offered in this report suggest several applications to other similar organizations as well as several directions for future study. Health care organizations might be viewed as male-dominated, since the hospital administrators and doctors traditionally have been predominately male, clerical workers and nurses have traditionally been predominately female. Similar attitudes about the sacrifice necessary to advance into a more powerful position might be found in the female clerical and nursing populations. Similar patterns of adopting male strategies to gain acceptance into a male-dominated population might be found among female administrators and doctors. Also, it might be interesting to discover if the medical profession has the same biases towards the words "power" and "influence."

The banking industry might serve as a private-sector comparison with the patterns discovered in this research in the public-sector educational organization. A predominance of males in administrative positions and females in subordinate positions might create similar feelings of powerlessness among the females. It would be interesting to observe any differences in a private-sector organizational environment between reactions to "power" and "influence" as ways of affecting change.

This research calls into question the assumption that "power" and "influence" are similar constructs. More theoretical work along the lines of Cobb (1984) and Sieber (1975), and the accumulation of interpretive data describing

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how actual cultures assign meaning to the word "power,"  
appear to be desirable for a greater understanding of the  
power paradigm and its relation to gender differences.

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